

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congressman Rob Wittman supported American energy development as the House voted to open up areas for energy development, including the Outer Continental Shelf area off the coast of Virginia. The House voted to pass H.R. 6082, a responsible plan to replace the President's restrictive proposal for oil and natural gas lease sales, which prohibited the previously-approved sale for energy development in Virginia.

"With the passage of this legislation, the House voted to put our country on a path toward energy independence and responsible use of our natural resources, especially here in Virginia," Wittman said. "Our economy is still struggling, with both unemployment rates and gas prices remaining high. And yet this Administration would still prefer to keep closed many areas that contain sources of American energy, including Virginia's coast. The President's proposal for lease sales, introduced in November of 2011, would continue to restrict environmentally sound drilling off of Virginia's coast, preventing Americans from pursuing a responsible comprehensive energy policy and inevitably maintaining our reliance on energy sources from unstable regions of the world. This is simply unacceptable.

"By directing the Secretary of the Interior to conduct additional Outer Continental Shelf lease sales between 2012 and 2017, the House replacement bill would generate over half a billion dollars in revenue and lead to the creation of tens of thousands of American jobs. I know that in Virginia, there is bipartisan support for opening up our offshore energy reserves to responsible cultivation in a way that does not harm the environment or jeopardize military exercises off the coast. This bill would achieve that goal. A responsible, all-of-the-above energy policy must include dependable use of American resources, and I was proud to support this bill today that backs American jobs and American-made energy."

H.R. 6082, the Congressional Replacement of President Obama's Energy-Restricting and Job-Limiting Offshore Drilling Plan, would direct the Secretary of the Interior to enact an oil and natural gas leasing program that includes the sale of 29 different Outer Continental Shelf leases scheduled between 2012 and 2017. The Secretary would also be required to provide an environmental impact statement. H.R. 6082 passed the House by a vote of 253-170 and now moves to the Senate for a vote.

Wittman has been an advocate for American energy exploration in Virginia, supporting multiple pieces of congressional legislation to open up domestic resources, and [joining with his colleagues](#) in asking the Interior Department to reconsider the ban on development in Virginia.

Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Armed Services Committee where he is the Chairman of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

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